

References

References are people who can attest to your qualifications as an employee as well as your character and personality traits as a person. References give an opportunity for employers to learn more about you as a person by what the reference does and does not say. People who serve as references are often very open with the information they share.

GETTING REFERENCES

This is the best part – you get to pick your references. You need to find three to five people who will speak positive of you. It is very important that you ask people if they are willing to serve as a reference so that they have time to think and prepare what they will say. To help them best prepare, provide them with a copy of your resume, tell them where you are applying and let them know what kind of jobs you are interested in.

REFERENCE QUALIFICATIONS

You should have two sets of references, personal and professional. Each set should include three to five people. Family members should not be used as references.

Good personal references are long-time friends, coaches, team members, peer volunteers and members of organizations you are affiliated with. These people should know you well enough to provide good insight into your personality and overall character.

Good professional references are instructors, past and present employers/supervisors, select co-workers and internship supervisors. These people should be able to speak on your technical ability to perform the job duties, how quickly you learn new tasks, your attention to detail and the likelihood if they would hire you again if they had the chance.

USING REFERENCES

References are listed on their own page – one page for professional references and one for personal references. It is customary to send references with your application packet, and you must send them whenever requested in a job posting.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Letters of recommendation are wonderful and should be kept as part of your portfolio. Copies of the letters can also be forwarded with your application material. However, they cannot stand alone. Even if you provide written recommendations you will still need to provide a list of references that a potential employer can contact on their own.